

Report of Assistant Director – Protection

Health and Safety Committee Update

Purpose of report

1. To provide a Health & Safety update on activities and items of significance.
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Recommendation

It is recommended that the following issues, in particular, be noted:

- (i) The involvement of the Service in Health and Safety initiatives; and*
- (ii) Health and Safety performance information recorded during January to March 2021 (Quarter 4).*

Introduction and Background

2. A key aim of Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of its employees and to reduce and prevent accidents and injuries at work as outlined in the People Strategy 2020-2022.
3. The Health and Safety Committee is established to provide effective arrangements for the liaison and review of matters of a common interest in regards to Health and Safety (H&S). The Committee provides the opportunity for the Service to discuss general H&S matters and to consult with the workforce via employee representatives. It is chaired by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer and last met on 16 June 2021.
4. The Committee has the facility to task work to the Health & Safety Working Group, which sits beneath it and is chaired by the Area Commander, Protection. The group meets as and when required.

Health & Safety Initiatives Update

National Activities

5. The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) continues to publish guidance and risk assessments to support with managing Covid-19; these are available on the NFCC website. HWFRS has utilised this facility and has used this as the basis of internal guidance, issuing regular updates to staff as required.

6. The HSE is considering increasing their no-notice visits; they will be looking at training on and off station and in training centres. All policies, procedures and risk assessments are to be in place for these locations and Risk Assessments for these locations must be specific and not generic. The H&S Advisor has spoken to the Group Commander (GC) responsible for Training Centre to make them aware and has been assured control measures are in place and are continually under review.
7. HWFRS has undertaken a GAP analysis of the updated NFCC 'Death in the Workplace' guidance. The H&S Advisor has been working with the GC Operational Policy, HR and Corporate Communications to enhance current procedures. Further updates will be brought to the Committee as part of the GAP analysis agenda item.

Regional Activities

8. Since the beginning of the Covid-19 outbreak, regional H&S business planning activities have been deferred. However, H&S staff from the five regional FRSS are in regular contact with each other to discuss Covid-19 related concerns and to share best practice. It is envisaged that the regional peer audit process will reconvene in late 2021.

HWFRS Local Activities

9. Following on from the last update that was provided in the Quarter 3 report, HWFRS have continued to monitor and implement safe systems of work via the Covid Recovery Group. Best practice guidance has been shared with departmental managers to ensure the 'Covid Secure' assessments/ fire risk assessments are regularly reviewed. The Service was also visited by the HSE as part of the Covid-19 workplace spot check process with no significant issues identified with our control measures.
10. The Service has continued to fully utilise government and NFCC guidance and to facilitate agile/hybrid working for support departments, with additional PPE and social distancing measures being introduced for all staff who remained operational. The H&S Advisor has provided assurance that all guidance is integrated into our own procedures.
11. Risk Assessment Database: During Quarter 4, a total of 389 risk assessments (RA) were reviewed and 57 new RAs were created (see table below). The database is maintained by the owners of the RAs, with automatic email prompts sent when the RAs are due to be reviewed. If they are no longer applicable, they are archived from the database.

Location	Quarter 1 (20/21)		Quarter 2 (20/21)		Quarter 3 (20/21)		Quarter 4 (20/21)	
	Reviewed	Created	Reviewed	Created	Reviewed	Created	Reviewed	Created
North District	36	5	115	12	119	6	92	14
South District	135	19	99	15	75	20	102	18
West District	123	57	128	112	95	8	69	19
Training Centre	8	0	56	1	29	2	96	2
Others	57	15	8	20	1	11	30	4
Total	359	96	406	160	319	47	389	57

Quarter 4 Performance Report

12. Appendix 1 provides details relating to all safety events that were reported and investigated during Quarter 4 (January to March 2021) of the 2020-21 reporting year.
13. The total number of safety events reported in Q4 increased significantly by 21 compared to the previous quarter. The key drivers in the increase in accident reporting are Personal Injuries (+13) and Near Hit / Cause for Concerns (+3). Increases also occurred in all other areas, apart from Violence and Aggression reports, which remained the same.
14. The Violence and Aggression incidents reported were of a minor nature and were of general frustration from members of public, which were controlled by the local officer in charge with no requirement for police assistance.
15. The majority of Vehicle Collisions happened during slow manoeuvring routine activities. A Service Bulletin article has been issued for crews to review the bankspersons online training package.
16. Seven injuries were reported to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) under the RIDDOR regulations – four were due to dangerous occurrences, two were over seven day injuries and one was due to a hospital visit.
17. Seven Basic Specialist Investigations took place as a result of three personal injuries, three property/equipment failures and one exposure incident.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	Contained within H&S budgets and departmental capacity.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	Corporate Strategy: ensuring firefighter safety.

Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	Reduces the overall impact for H&S management in the areas identified and safeguards the Services legal requirements.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Representative Bodies attend H&S Committee and are fully consulted on H&S matters.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	N/A

Supporting Information

Appendix 1: Quarter 4 (January - March 2021) Event Reporting and Summary